



Psychological Well-Being and Marital Stability Among Working Mothers in Oyo Metropolis

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Abstract

Couples must effectively manage the process of shifting into a lasting partnership in order to attain family stability. Over time, there has been a troubling rise in the number of separations, divorces, unhappy marriages, and domestic abuse cases reported by the community. This study looked at the relationship between married stability and psychological well-being among Oyo working mothers. The researcher selected six secondary schools and six higher education institutions from four local governments using a combination of simple random selection and selective sampling techniques. Out of the six primary and secondary schools, 150 participants were selected, with 25 people selected from each school. In addition, 150 individuals were picked, with 30 participants selected from each of Oyo's five current higher education institutions. The study included a sample of three hundred working mothers. The Factors Influencing Marital Stability Scale (FIMSS) with a correlation coefficient of 0.78 and the Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS) with a correlation coefficient of 0.86 were used to collect the data. We looked at the data using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The results of the study showed a significant relationship ($r = 0.763$) between working moms' psychological well-being and stable marriages. The stability of the marital relationship and the length of marriage showed a substantial link ($r = 0.777$). Working mothers' educational attainment and marital stability showed a significant positive connection ($r = 0.655$). However, $r = 0.192$ indicated no meaningful relationship between working mothers' marital stability and their family history. These results suggest that counselling psychologists should schedule frequent marriage seminars in schools to address the main causes of marital instability and educate married people about the long-term effects of instability on families.

Keywords: Psychological well-being, Marital stability, Educational level, Family background, Years of marriage

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Introduction

The cornerstone of any society is marriage. This establishment is accredited and capable of fulfilling the responsibilities of parenthood, love, and care for its constituents. Despite being universal, these roles may differ in type or character depending on the culture. Researchers have seen various impacts, manifestations, occurring, and occurrences in marriage within African society due to the dynamics of culture and human connections, particularly love. There have been both beneficial and bad effects. However, a recent study on attitudes about marriage in contemporary African society indicates that these have an alarmingly detrimental impact (Maciver & Dimkpa, 2012). The fundamental framework of a marriage creates a family and raises the next generation (Nadar, 2018). It is now impossible to ignore the growing number of couples experiencing crises, which frequently result in total collapse (Cumming, Marrile & George, 2010). Numerous family problems have been linked to the error of selecting an unsuitable or inappropriate companion.

A loving, respectful, and mutually satisfying marriage is one in which both partners are content with their current state of affairs (Karney & Bradbury, 2020). Stable marriage refers to a steady or stable union. According to Onwuamanam (2010), stability is characterised by a high rate of benefits traded between parties and a low rate of punishments exchanged between parties. He also noted that stable families are those in which couples have happy, fulfilling relationships. One in which the spouse provides the other with financial support, emotional support, company, and sexual fulfilment. The authors additionally observed that there is mutual understanding between the spouses regarding the primary concerns of marriage, including managing household finances and interacting with relatives. Numerous elements have been found to be predictive of stable marriages. These consist of things like education, marital age, work status, physical and mental health, and so on (Adejori, Adekeye & Adejumo, 2021). The link between one's physical and psychological states determines one's overall health and well-being. According to Karney and Bradbury (2020), there is a reciprocal relationship between overall well-being and marriage stability.

Specifically, general well-being enhances marital stability. Family well-being is a continuous endeavour. Family members must strive to keep it that way by making the necessary changes when the situation calls for them to (Sinha, 2017). The ability to transition into a sustainable relationship is a prerequisite on the path towards marital well-being. According to Khajeh, Goodarzi, and Soleiman (2014), family success is frequently determined by how happy and satisfied its members are. As a result, a family can be considered stable if its members display happiness and fulfilment. There is a strong correlation between marital adjustment and well-being. According to Karney and Bradbury (2020), compatibility is one of the factors that predicts a happy marriage; if it isn't, instability is certain. This suggests that an unstable family is one in which there is turmoil, pride, illogical thinking, a lack of positive communication, a lack of caring and management, a lack of love, and so forth.

According to Obiekwe and Ekebosi (2020), marriage is a legally binding, customarily observed, and solemn connection between a man and a woman. They considered marriage to be a stable, long-term partnership between a man and a woman, supported by a court order for companionship and reproduction, as well as primary and secondary agreements. The balance of unwavering love, unrestricted acceptance, unwavering tolerance, spiritual solemnisation, and unrestrained partnership between parents and their children is a fitting definition of stability. Staying legally married without divorcing, separating physically, or filing for divorce is what Mitchel and Plauche (2016) characterised as marital stability. When a married couple adheres to, works towards, and consistently supports one another in a particular task, hobby, or goal, they

attain marital stability. According to Dubose (2015), if a couple does not actively work to keep their relationship strong, it could end up neglected. Therefore, both couples' good contributions are necessary to build a stable connection. Stability in marriage promotes a harmonious and functional home life, which in turn promotes a well-adjusted and forward-thinking society (Echebe, 2010). Although they are not the same thing, marital stability and marital quality and satisfaction are closely associated. Stability in the marriage is a result of satisfied spouses. According to Wisman, Gilmore, and Salinger (2018), stable and fulfilled marriages are associated with longer lifespans, better health, and more happiness for spouses. It is an essential component of family life and life satisfaction. However, the percentage of literate people in Nigeria and many other African nations is quite low (Maciver & Dimkpa, 2012). This thus affects the stability of married life. According to Animasahun and Fatile (2011), marital stability is characterised by a restricted number of issues or difficulties. The term is to achieve or restore the highest level of personal independence and self-sufficiency. The definition of marital stability is whether or not a married couple chooses to stay together rather than getting a divorce or splitting up. Stability in marriage is known by a variety of names. According to Obieckwe and Ekebosi (2020), the most commonly utilised are marital happiness, marital quality, marital cohesion, and marital adjustment. Mackiver and Dimkpa (2012) have linked the concept of marital stability to some aspects of the home environment, including warmth, emotional availability, stimulation, family togetherness, and daily activities. When a husband and wife are understanding of one another and take care of one another without planning to end their marriage, they can experience a certain level of peace and love that is known as marital stability (Adesanya, 2009). Achieving one's hopes and aims in a married life, or achieving the affective state of a partner who has fulfilled their aspirations in marriage, is what it means to be satisfied in a marriage.

A person's subjective perception of particular elements without reference to their marital ties is known as marital stability. This include roles, reciprocities and interpersonal interactions, prosperities, motivations, variables that contribute to marital discord, privacy, preferences, and the perception of humour and attribution from both parties. According to Obieckwe and Ekebosi (2020), marital stability may be defined as the outcome of interactions between a husband and wife as well as the degree of agreement between expectations of the marriage and its benefits. Socioeconomic variables, according to Baker (2014), are measures of a person's overall social and economic standing and are typically positively correlated with improved health. It speaks about the amount of money a person makes at a specific moment in time. This could be the total revenue received on a daily, weekly, monthly, or annual basis. It was also asserted that the amount of the wage the head of the household received at work and the resultant style of living that it permitted had the greatest single impact on the families of educated workers. along with additional factors that determine the stability of a marriage. According to Arowolo (2014), income and education contribute to successful marriages. There has been a claim made that education helps couples communicate more effectively, which facilitates conflict resolution. On the other hand, couples who are under stress due to financial difficulties become less expressive of their emotional support, argue more over money, and get more agitated. However, highly educated people could have very high expectations for marriage and want a significant amount of companionship, emotional support, and personal fulfilment from their partners. Obiekwe and Ekebosi (2020) defined socio-economic variables as the assessment of the impacts of macro-variables that represent the socioeconomic environment in which people live, such as social standing, educational attainment, employment, family income, define socioeconomic variables, etc.

It describes mental wellness that is in good shape. The World Health Organisation (2020) defines psychological well-being as having good mental health. It described psychological well-being as the capacity to complete tasks, manage obstacles in life, be productive at work, and make

a positive contribution to the advancement of one's community. Mental health and Psychological well-being are interchangeable terms. The best possible functioning of one's social and personal life is another definition (Huppert, 2017; Keyes, Shmotkin & Ryff, 2002). In his investigation into the meaning of psychological well-being, Ryff (1995) concluded that dividing wellbeing into six dimensions—each of which influences an individual's sense of well-being—would give wellbeing a deeper significance. These include self-acceptance, personal development, positive interpersonal relationships, environmental mastery, autonomy, and a purpose in life.

Ghazwakili, Norrouzinia, Kabir, and Karimi (2014) suggest that low psychological well-being lowers the likelihood of marital contentment. Azman, Piran, Jahanihashem, and Dehshankar (2017) discovered a substantial correlation between marital satisfaction and anxiety ($p < 0.001$) and depression ($p > 0.012$). Mamum, Clararino, Nahman, Williams, Callaghan, and Bor (2009) discovered a robust reciprocal association between women's marital relationships and depression. Women with depressive symptoms reported having unhappy marriages, whereas women without depressive symptoms reported having happy marriages. According to Randall and Bodenmann's (2017) theory, individuals with low psychological well-being were more likely to endure stressful events and have angry conversations with their spouses. These behaviours can result in marital crisis, instability, and lower psychological well-being. This is consistent with research by Oginyi, Ofoke, and Francis (2015), who discovered a strong link between psychological health and stable marriages. However, there is little evidence to support a substantial correlation between psychological well-being and marital satisfaction, according to Karagulle et al. (2019). The previous study by Kamp-Dush, Taylor, and Kroeger (2008), which discovered that respondents with low marital happiness had the highest degree of psychological well-being, lends weight to this conclusion. Yadav and Kumar (2015) discovered in their research that female bankers have lower psychological well-being and greater instability at home than teachers, especially those in their early childhood.

Statement of the Problem

One unsettling aspect of the modern society is the brittleness of the matrimonial tie. It affects every continent and is prevalent in all societal strata. It also affects people of all races, socioeconomic backgrounds, levels of education, and religious beliefs. The reasons impeding the stability of marriage are endemic, which is concerning, particularly in Africa where marriage is highly revered. According to a number of studies, women are more likely than males to experience anxiety and depression (Whiteford et al., 2013; World Health Organisation, 2020). Psychological well-being and marital stability have generally been the subject of separate research (Obiekwe & Ekebosi, 2020; Karagulle, et al. 2019; Adejori, Okolie, Musa & Dalhutu, 2019; Roslan, et al, 2017; Sinha, 2017; Arowolo 2014, Srimath & Kumar, 2010; Bakare, et al. 2017; Kayp-Dush, et al. 2008; Amma, 2008). Prior research has demonstrated a connection between psychological health and stable marriages (Okojide, et al. 2023; Okojide et al. 2021). Given the disparities in gender, culture, and geography, it is important to learn more about the nature of their connection in the Nigerian setting. This provides reason for the current investigation, which aims to ascertain the connection between working moms' psychological well-being and marital stability in Oyo state.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between psychological well-being and marital stability of working mothers in Oyo, Oyo state.

Hypotheses

Four null hypotheses were generated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. They are:

1. There is no significant relationship between psychological well-being and marital stability of working mothers.
2. There is no significant relationship between years of marriage and marital stability of working mothers.
3. There is no significant relationship between educational level and marital stability of working mothers.
4. There is no significant relationship between family background and marital stability of working mothers.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study is correlational research design which involved the use of questionnaire to elicit information from the respondents to determine the relationship between psychological well-being and marital stability of working mothers in Oyo. The population included all working moms in secondary and tertiary schools in Oyo metropolis' four local government regions (Oyo East, West, Atiba, and Afijio). The study sampled using purposeful and simple random sampling. The researcher used married, intact-family participants. Nworgu (2006) says purposive sampling is best for achieving a study's goal by selecting variables that meet preset criteria. We randomly selected six secondary schools, the four local administrations. Each of the **six** schools selected 25 working mothers, totalling 150. Selecting five tertiary universities was intentional. The schools are Emmanuel Alayande University of Education, Ajayi Crowther University, Federal School of Surveying, Federal College of Education (Special), and Atiba University. Each of the five schools selected 30 working mothers to make 150. 300 respondents participated.

Instruments

This study examines psychological well-being and marital stability. The three-section questionnaire collected data. Section A data is demographic. Ryff and Keyes' 1995 18-item Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS) is in Section B. Six well-being dimensions are on the 18-item measure. They include environmental mastery, personal growth, autonomy, constructive relationships, life commitment, and self-acceptance. It uses a 5-point Likert scale from 5 (Strongly Agree) to 1 (Strongly Disagree). The scale's reliability is .81-.88. Section C contains Maciver & Dimkpa (2012)'s 24-item Factor Influencing Marital Stability Scale (FIMSS). The six sub-sections have four items each for social, financial, religious, sexual, household, and behavioural variables. Scale reliability is 0.78. The 4-point Likert Scale measured responders' agreement. Positive things scored SA (4), A (3), D (2), SD (1). Reversed negatives: SA (1); A (2); D (3); SD (4). Maximum response score is 96, minimum 24. The midpoint is 36. This suggests that respondents with 60 to 96 had a stronger view of marital stability elements than those with 60 and below.

Five psychometric property and psychology instructors evaluated the two instruments' cultural adaption. These experts agree that the scales' items evaluate psychological well-being and marital stability, proving their content validity. The instrument was pilot-tested with 50 respondents like the 300 in the main study to establish dependability. Cronbach alpha coefficient yielded PWBS ($\alpha = 0.86$), FIMSS ($\alpha = 0.82$). Thus, the instruments' internal consistency coefficients were high, showing reliability.

Data Collection

The research instruments were administered to the respondents by the researcher and two research assistants. Permission was sought with the authorities of the various schools and tertiary institutions used. The administration and collection of the instruments were done within seven days.

Data Analysis

The questionnaire scale is divided into three sections: A, B, and C. Section A aimed to acquire personal information from the participants. Section B encompasses the Psychological Well-Being Scale, whilst section C comprises the Factors Influencing Marital Stability Scale. The demographic component was analysed using frequency counts and percentages. The data was then analysed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient at a significance threshold of 0.05 to determine the link between the variables.

Results

Table 1: Demographic Data Information of Participants

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL		
ND/NCE	54	18.00
HND/BSc	110	36.66
M.Ed/M.Sc.	76	25.33
Ph.D	64	21.33
Total	300	100
YEAR OF MARRIAGE		
1 – 10years	77	25.66
11 – 20years	105	35.00
21 – 30years	82	27.33
31 and above years	36	12.00
Total	300	100
FAMILY TYPE		
Polygamous	185	61.66
Monogamous	115	38.33
Total	300	100
AGE		
30 – 40	46	15.33
41 – 50	102	34.00
51 – 60	120	40.00
61 and above	32	10.66
Total	300	100

Table 1 shows participant demographics. Fifty-four participants (18.00%) had NCE/ND certificates (36.66%). Seventy six individuals had B.Sc/HND, 25.33% had M.Ed/MSc, and 64 (21.33%) had Ph.D. 77 participants (25.66%) had 10 years or less of marriage experience. Out of 105 participants, 35% had 11-20 years of experience. Eighty-two participants (27.33%) had 21-30 years of marriage experience, whereas thirty-six (12%) had 31+ years. 185 (61.66%) were

polygamous and 115 (38.33%) were monogamous. The age distribution of participants was 15.33% 30-40, 34% 41-50, 40% 51-60, and 10.66% 61+.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between psychological well-being and marital stability of working mothers.

Table 2: Summary Table of Relationship between Psychological Well-Being and Marital Stability of Working Mothers

Variable	\bar{x}	SD	N	Df	r	Sign.
Psychological Well-being	28.624	9.604	300	298	0.763	P<.05
Marital Stability	32.240	12.590				

Based on the information provided in Table 2, the calculated r-value of 0.763 exceeds the critical r-value of 0.195, with 298 degrees of freedom, at a significance level of 0.05 ($r = p < .05$). Thus, it may be deduced that there is a strong correlation between the psychological well-being and marital stability of working mothers. Therefore, the hypothesis proposing that there is no substantial association between the psychological well-being and marital stability of working mothers is not upheld.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between years of marriage and marital stability of working mothers.

Table 3: Summary Table of Relationship between Years of Marriage and Marital Stability of Working Mothers

Variable	\bar{x}	SD	N	Df	R	Sign.
Years of Marriage	27.552	8.996	300	298	0.777	P<.05
Marital Stability	32.240	12.590				

Table 3 shows that the calculated r-value of 0.777 exceeds the critical r-value of 0.195, with 298 degrees of freedom, at a significance level of 0.05 ($r = p < 0.05$). These data suggest that the length of marriage had a significant impact on marital stability among working mothers. As a result, the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between marriage duration and marital stability among employed mothers is unsupported.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between educational level and marital stability.

Table 4: Summary Table of the Relationship between Educational Level and Marital Stability of Working Mothers

Variable	\bar{x}	SD	N	Df	r	Sign.
Educational Level	26.866	8.246	300	298	0.655	P<.05
Marital Stability	32.240	12.590				

Table 4 shows that the computed r-value of 0.655 exceeds the threshold r-value of 0.195, with 298 degrees of freedom and a 0.05 significance level. This suggests that educational disparities have a major impact on employed mothers' ability to keep a secure marriage. As a result, the hypothesis that there is no substantial relationship between working moms' educational level and marital stability fails.

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant relationship between family background and marital stability of working mothers

Table 5: Summary Table of the Relationship between Family Background and Marital Stability of Working Mothers

Variable	\bar{x}	SD	N	df	r	Sign.
Family Background	17.670	2.406	300	298	0.192	NS
Marital Stability	32.240	12.590				

With 298 degrees of freedom and a significance threshold of 0.05 ($r = p > .05$), the computed r-value of 0.192 is less than the critical r-value of 0.195 based on the data shown in Table 5. This validates the premise that there is no meaningful correlation between working mothers' marital stability and their parental history.

Discussion

The results of this study provide credence to hypothesis 1, which suggests a strong correlation between working mothers' psychological well-being and their marriages' stability. This Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient test resulted in the rejection of the first hypothesis ($r = 0.763$; $p < 0.05$). The outcome is consistent with past research by Okojide, et al (2023). Roslan, Ahmad, Nabilla, and Ghiami (2017) also discovered a strong correlation between the participants' psychological well-being. Khajeh, Goodarzi, and Soleman (2014) discovered a strong link between marital stability and psychological well-being. This finding, however, conflicts with a 2019 study by Karagulle et al. that found no meaningful association between psychological well-being and marital stability. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient test resulted in the rejection of the second hypothesis ($r = 0.777$; $p < 0.05$). The findings indicated a strong correlation between the number of years married and the stability of the marriage. This supports earlier studies by Adejori, Okolie, Musa, Shehu, and Dalhatu (2019), Thomas, Hess, and Thurston (2015), and Oyewo (2024), which found that women have high levels

of marital stability during two distinct stages. the first years of marriage and as the length of the union grows. As a result, factors such as age, length of marriage, and experiences shared by partners may have a beneficial effect on women's marital satisfaction. It is also possible to conclude that early in a marriage, there is a lower degree of responsibility with regard to childrearing and mothering. Also disproved ($r = 0.655$; $p < 0.05$) was the third hypothesis. The findings indicated that there is a strong correlation between marital stability and educational attainment. These results are consistent with other studies by Arowolo (2014), Guo, and Huang (2005), which discovered that a couple's success in marriage is influenced by their educational attainment. There was a claim made that uneducated couples have higher levels of marital discord than educated couples. This outcome, however, disagrees with Obiekwe and Ekebosi's (2020) findings.

Oyewo (2014) and Animasahun and Fatile (2011) discovered no connection between educational attainment and marital stability. Nevertheless, this study was unable to understand how variations in working moms' marital stability according to their educational attainment could be a meaningful factor. The outcome demonstrates that having a good education really frees a person from marital instability and gives them access to a variety of coping mechanisms. $R = 0.192$; $p > 0.05$ supported the acceptance of the fourth hypothesis. The findings indicated that there was no correlation between working mothers' marital stability and their family background. This demonstrates that working mothers from diverse backgrounds do not significantly differ in terms of marital stability. This is consistent with the earlier findings of Animashaun and Fatile (2011) and Obiekwe and Ekebosi (2020), who similarly found no significant correlation between working moms' marital stability and their family background. The best way to express this would be to say that every couple experiences the same kinds of environmental influences and life engagement. Evidence from this study suggests that a newly married couple's family background may provide some protection against unstable marriages. The association between working moms' marital stability and their familial history is significantly correlated, contrary to the findings of Arowolo (2014), Oginyi, Ofole, and Francis (2015).

Conclusion

The researcher believes that more families would be spared from dissolution if counselling psychologists ventured outside of the classroom and used the media to address important issues leading to marital instability. This is because the findings showed some predictors of marital stability. Psychologists who specialise in counselling should host seminars on marriage at schools and religious institutions to educate married individuals about the subtle ways in which instability can permeate families. To effectively navigate the problems of everyday life, couples must be able to relate to each other on an emotional level and communicate their feelings.

Recommendations

The researcher believes that more families would be spared from dissolution if counselling psychologists ventured outside of the classroom and used the media to address important issues leading to marital instability. This is because the findings showed some predictors of marital stability. Psychologists who specialise in counselling should host seminars on marriage at schools and religious institutions to educate married individuals about the subtle ways in which instability can permeate families. To effectively navigate the problems of everyday life, couples must be able to relate to each other on an emotional level and communicate their feelings.

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